

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
INFO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS
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TAGS: PFOR, UY

SUBJECT:CONGRESSIONAL RELATIONS - URUGUAY

1. FOLLOWING LETTER WAS SENT TO CONGRESSMAN KOCH ON
JULY 14:

"I AM PLEASED TO REPLY TO YOUR LETTER OF JUNE 17 REQUEST-
ING INFORMATION ABOUT MR. WILSON FERREIRA ALDUNATE.

"MR. FERREIRA ENTERED URUGUAYAN POLITICS IN THE 1930'S
AS A MEMBER OF THE INDEPENDENT NATIONALIST PARTY (PNI), A
SPLINTER BLANCO PARTY. THE BLANCO AND THE COLORADO
PARTIES ARE HISTORICALLY THE PRINCIPAL POLITICAL PARTIES
IN URUGUAY; BOTH HAD SEVERAL FACTIONS AND SUB-FACTIONS.
MR. FERREIRA HELD SEVERAL IMPORTANT PARTY POSITIONS IN
THE PNI AND WAS INSTRUMENTAL IN ORGANIZING LIST 400, A
PNI FACTION. THE POLITICAL OUTLOOK OF THIS ORGANIZATION
WAS LIBERAL. HE WAS ELECTED TO THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES
AS AN ALTERNATE FOR THE 1951-55 TERM, AND WHEN THE IN-
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CUMBENT RESIGNED IN 1954, MR. FERREIRA TOOK HIS SEAT.

"IN 1954, AS THE PNI BECAME MORIBUND, MR. FERREIRA RE-
JOINED THE REGULAR BLANCO PARTY AND HELPED ESTABLISH
THE BLANCO RECONSTRUCTION FACTION WITH THE LIST 400 AS
ITS DOMINANT SUBFACTION. IN 1958 THE BLANCO RECON-
STRUCTION FACTION JOINED THE BLANCO DEMOCRATIC UNION (UBD)
AND MR. FERREIRA WAS ELECTED TO A FOUR-YEAR TERM AS UBD
NATIONAL DEPUTY FROM COLONIA (A PROVINCE OF URUGUAY).
WHILE IN THE LEGISLATURE, HE SERVED DURING 1958-59 AS
CHAIRMAN OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE AND IN 1960 AS
THE LEGISLATURE'S FIRST VICE PRESIDENT.

"MR. FERREIRA WAS APPOINTED MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND
LIVESTOCK IN 1963. IN 1966 HE WAS ELECTED TO THE SENATE
FOR THE FIRST TIME. IN 1969 MR. FERREIRA LEFT THE LIST
400 TO FORM HIS OWN POLITICAL FACTION, POR LA PATRIA,
WHICH HE USED AS THE FACTION TO SUPPORT HIS PRESIDENTIAL
CANDIDACY. LIKE THE LIST 400, THIS FACTION WAS CON-
SIDERED LIBERAL. IN 1971, MR. FERREIRA WAS ELECTED A
SENATOR FOR A SECOND CONSECUTIVE FIVE-YEAR TERM. HE RAN
SIMULTANEOUSLY FOR THE PRESIDENCY AS THE BLANCO PARTY'S
LEADING CANDIDATE; HE OUTPOLLED THE LEADING COLORADO
PARTY'S LEADING CANDIDATE, JUAN BORDABERRY, BUT LOST THE
ELECTION BECAUSE UNDER URUGUAY'S COMPLEX ELECTORAL
SYSTEM, IN WHICH EACH PARTY CAN FIELD MORE THAN ONE
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE, THE CANDIDATE RECEIVING THE MOST
VOTES OF THE PARTY RECEIVING THE MOST VOTES WINS THE
PRESIDENCY.

"DURING THE PERIOD MR. FERREIRA WAS POLITICALLY ACTIVE IN
URUGUAY, HE WAS WELL KNOWN BY OUR EMBASSY IN MONTEVIDEO
WHICH MAINTAINED GOOD RELATIONS WITH HIM AS IT DID WITH
OTHER URUGUAYAN POLITICAL LEADERS. MR. FERREIRA WENT
INTO SELF-IMPOSED EXILE IN 1973 AND SINCE THAT TIME HAS
BEEN IN CONTACT WITH EVENTS IN HIS COUNTRY FROM A DIS-
TANCE.

"SOME OF THE ALLEGATIONS MADE BY MR. FERREIRA DURING THE
RECENT FRASER SUBCOMMITTEE HEARINGS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED BY
REPORTS OF REPUTABLE INTERNATIONAL BODIES CONCERNED WITH
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HUMAN RIGHTS. OTHERS HAVE BEEN REPORTED BY INTERNATIONAL
NEWS-GATHERING AGENCIES. HOWEVER, MR. FERREIRA HAS MADE
VARIOUS STATEMENTS REGARDING THE SITUATION IN URUGUAY
WHICH DIFFER FROM THE INFORMATION AVAILABLE TO US. IN
SOME CASES IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO CONFIRM WHETHER OUR INFORM-
ATION IS CORRECT OR HIS.

"THE PUBLIC RECORD WOULD SEEM TO DISPROVE HIS ASSERTION

THAT THERE HAS BEEN NO TERRORIST ACTIVITY IN URUGUAY SINCE 1973. A RAPID REVIEW OF OUR FILES INDICATES THAT IN APRIL 1974, IN A FIRE FIGHT BETWEEN TUPAMARO AND

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URUGUAYAN SECURITY FORCES ONE GUERRILLA AND ONE ARMY ENLISTED MAN WERE KILLED, IN THAT SAME MONTH, IN A SEPARATE INCIDENT, AN URUGUAYAN POLICEMAN WAS KILLED, TWO OFFICERS WOUNDED AND FOUR GUERRILLAS KILLED IN AN EXCHANGE OF MACHINE GUN FIRE. IN THAT SAME MONTH THE MINISTRY OF LABOR IN MONTEVIDEO WAS BOMBED. A NEWSPAPER OFFICE WAS BOMBED THE FOLLOWING MONTH. IN JANUARY OF THIS YEAR SEVERAL SITES IN PUNTA DEL ESTE WERE BOMBED. LATE IN 1975 A LARGE CACHE OF ARMS INCLUDING MANY AUTOMATIC WEAPONS WAS DISCOVERED BY THE GOVERNMENT OF URUGUAY. GIVEN THE RECORD OF VIOLENCE IN URUGUAY IT IS DIFFICULT TO BELIEVE THESE WEAPONS WERE NOT PLANNED FOR SUBVERSIVE USE.

"MR. FERREIRA ALSO MADE SOME STATEMENTS DURING THE HEARINGS CONCERNING THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN URUGUAY WHICH ARE NOT SUPPORTED BY THE FACTS. HIS CHARGE THAT OUR EMBASSY IN URUGUAY ACTS AS A PUBLIC RELATIONS AGENT FOR THE URUGUAYAN GOVERNMENT IS UNTRUE. HIS ALLEGATION THAT OUR EMBASSY INTERFERES IN INTERNAL POLITICS AND THE RESTRUCTURING OF THE CONSTITUTION IS ALSO UNTRUE. NOR DOES THE U.S. GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATE IN WHAT MR. FERREIRA REFERS TO AS THE URUGUAYAN REPRESSIVE APPARATUS. BOTH THE AID PUBLIC SAFETY PROGRAM, TERMINATED IN 1974, AND THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS WERE THE SUBJECT OF AN IN-DEPTH GAO SURVEY IN 1975 AS TO WHETHER THEY HAD BEEN CONDUCTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH CONGRESSIONAL INTENT. AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW, THE GAO MADE NO RECOMMENDATIONS

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FOR CURTAILMENT OF OUR MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

"CERTAINLY OUR EMBASSY HAS NEVER CLAIMED THAT SUBVERSION CANNOT BE CURBED WITHOUT SUPPRESSING LIBERTIES. IN FACT, WE HAVE CONSISTENTLY MADE OUR CONCERN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VERY CLEAR TO URUGUAYAN OFFICIALS AND WE CONTINUE TO DO SO.

"I HOPE THIS INFORMATION WILL BE OF USE TO YOU IN YOUR EVALUATION OF MR. FERREIRA'S TESTIMONY."

2. POSTS MAY USE THIS LETTER FOR WHATEVER USE MAY BE APPROPRIATE. ROBINSON

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